Dear Colleagues,

In this document you will find helpful information for the Life Skills/GPS Pilot Study. This material will also be posted to the project website. <http://nc4-heval.wikispaces.com>

As a review, here is how the pilot will work.

**Purpose of the pilot.** We would like both mentors and the young people with whom they work to complete online assessments of some new tools we have created to measure life skills related to goal setting, goal pursuit, and goal management as well as attributes if the Five Cs of Positive Youth Development. **We will send the links to the surveys in an email. The links will also be posted on the wiki page after the email is sent.** We are looking to show that these more user-friendly are valid substitutes for the concepts that are included in the more time-intensive (and less user-friendly) 4-H Study of PYD questionnaire. We are looking for young people ages 10-18 and the adult mentors who work with them.

**Role of Agents.** Collaborating agents will be expected to recruit youth and mentors, arrange for a site, and facilitate the process (participation list, addresses for gift cards, etc.).

**Obtaining consent.** First we would need consent to participate from both the mentors and up to five youth with whom they work. These documents are available on <http://nc4-heval.wikispaces.com> . If you have a club with more than 5 youth, that is perfectly fine. We just need one mentor to be matched with no more than five youth. Mentors can assess less than five youth; we just do not want them to have more than five. This decision was based on valuing the mentors’ time and because we are planning an evaluation of a toolkit to teach these skills after we validate these measures in the pilot. If a site decides to participate in the evaluation, we would need some young people left over who did not take part in the pilot since we cannot evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention on the same youth we piloted the measures on. The take-away message is that for each youth who consents to take part, he or she needs to be matched with one mentor. Also we would prefer that parents try to avoid completing the surveys on their own children, but rather assess youth who are not their children. If parents do assess their own children, we must emphasize that the parent should assess the child in terms of the goals and skills that he or she sets and pursues as part of the 4-H program.

**Keeping track of participants.** After distributing the consent forms in the manner you most see fit and arranging for a site for mentors and youth to complete the online surveys, you will need to keep track of which mentors and youth have agreed to participate (for incentive purposes) and also provide the mentors with identification numbers for themselves and for the youth about whom they will complete surveys (It is critical that all participants have id numbers so their data can be matched). I have attached a sample form that could be used as a template for each county to keep track of those participating. I would recommend cutting and pasting the column headers and then cutting and pasting the row that corresponds to your county. That will give you the id number for the first mentor in your county who signs up to participate in the pilot study. **An important note: if you plan to use this template, make sure to change the number format for the cell to text. This change will allow you to enter numbers that start with zeros and ensure that they keep that format.** From there you will assign id numbers to mentors and youth according to the system detailed below. **After you create your set of numbers, please call Ben Silliman (919-515-8485) or Kate Guerdat (919 515-9568) to confirm you are on the right track.**

**The id numbering system.** Here is how the numbering system works. Attached is an excel spreadsheet including the counties of NC and their corresponding FIPS Codes. The FIPS code is created using the state FIPS Code - North Carolina is 37 - and the county FIPS Code.   In addition, I have included columns for site code, mentor code, and person code.   As mentioned, this spreadsheet could be edited and added to in order to keep track of actually participants if you'd like.

The site code will be 01 for each NC site since that there will only be one site per county.  If by chance more than one site per county takes part, then there site numbers would be 02, 03, 04, …etc.

The mentor code will need to be assigned by the county agents based on when each mentor signs up for the pilot.  These numbers start at 01 and with each new mentor who joins, the mentor number will increase by 01 (02, 03, 04, 05, ... 99)..

Finally, the person code will be the same for all mentors - 0.  This is so that when grouping mentors with the youth they assess, the matrix items are organized more clearly.  The mentors (or agents) will assign the person code for each youth who participates (up to 5 youth per mentor).  Therefore, the person code for a youth could range from 1 to 5 based upon the order the youth's consent form is received.

So, for example, the first mentor to sign up in Buncombe county would receive the id number 37 021 01 01 0.  He or she will then assign the id numbers

37 021 01 01 **1**,

37 021 01 01 **2**,

37 021 01 01 **3**,

37 021 01 01 **4**, and

37 021 01 01 **5**

to the five youth whom they mentor that consent to participate.

The second mentor to sign up in Buncombe county would receive the id number 37 021 01 **02** 0.  He or she will then assign the id numbers

37 021 01 **02** **1**,

37 021 01 **02** **2**,

37 021 01 **02** **3**,

37 021 01 **02** **4**, and

37 021 01 **02** **5**

to the youth whom they mentor that consent to participate.

When mentors sign-up, they are given their id number along with the five numbers they would assign to the five youth who have consented to participate on an index card.   Therefore, index cards with mentor and youth ids could be created prior to distribution.  **Remember not all mentors need to have five youth to participate. To participate, each mentor needs at least one youth to be matched with. For a mentor with less than five youth, they will just not use all five numbers provided to them.**

The id number and corresponding mentor name should also be recorded by the agent so we/you know who to follow up with in case measures aren't completed by the September 15th deadline, or in case a mentor forgets their number or loses their card.  The mentor would turn in the card when he/she has completed the process. **Remember, please call Ben Silliman (919-515-8485) or Kate Guerdat (919 515-9568) to confirm you are on the right track with the id numbers you assign.**

We at Tufts would then get the form with mentors' names (without the corresponding id numbers) and their county id so we can make sure all participants receive their incentives. **Mail or email a copy of the registration form without code numbers to Edmond P. Bowers, Ph.D., , Research Assistant Professor, Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development, Director, GPS Project, 307 Lincoln Filene Building, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155 (ed.bowers@tufts.edu). Tufts will send gift cards to addresses listed.**

**Completing the online surveys.**  As mentioned, we will send links to the online surveys in a subsequent email. There will be four surveys to choose from: a mentor-completed or youth-completed survey for youth ages 10-13 and a mentor-completed or youth-completed survey for youth ages 14-18. Mentors or youth will click on the appropriate survey based on the youth’s age and their position.

The surveys involve answering a numbers of questions about the youth. It should take the youth about 45 minutes to complete the youth version of the survey.  The mentors will need about 20 minutes to complete the mentor-version survey for each youth. We will then analyze the data, and see whether our new rubric tools are assessing the same concepts as the 4-H Study questionnaire.

**Webinar training.** As part of the piloting process, we are planning on having a live webinar training for all organizations interested in participating.  You may have already participated in one of these sessions. This webinar would last about an hour to an hour and a half and would cover the purpose of the pilot, what a rubric is, how to use them, etc.  However, even if all mentors or agents could not make the live training, recordings will be available on the 4-H project website.

**Materials to help with training and completing the surveys.** On the project website, you will find a number of items that will be helpful for the training as well as for working with your youth to complete the surveys.

1. Powerpoint slides from training webinar.
2. Primer for GPS skills and 6 Cs of PYD – definitions of each of the GPS skills or C attributes
3. Rubric reference sheets – print versions of rubrics mentors and youth will complete online
4. Rubric scoring guide reference – a quick way to remember what each level of the rubric represents – one for the mentor and for the youth
5. 2 practice vignettes and relevant rubrics from the webinar training.
6. Scoring rationale for the 2 vignettes.

**Incentives.** Tufts will send a gift card for youth and mentors who complete the surveys, ($20 for youth, $50 for adults). Gift-cards for mentors could be used toward site expenses if personnel are not allowed to accept compensation for participating.

**Target dates for completion of research.** Please set aside time to complete the surveys by September 15, 2010. This might provide a great opportunity to facilitate thinking about last year's accomplishments and next year's plans, perhaps leaving some "talk time" with the youth (while the mentor is finishing up) about their individual and club program.

**Reporting results.** To maintain confidentiality and participants’ privacy, we will send reports to participating sites with a to-be-determined minimum number of participants (to maintain confidentiality and prevent generalizing to the group from only a few surveys). In addition, each report will be shared only with the applicable site. Site reports are to be used for internal planning purposes only and are not to be made public.

Thank you very much for your time and efforts to support our work. Please feel free to contact me ([ed.bowers@tufts.edu](mailto:ed.bowers@tufts.edu)) or Ben Silliman ([ben\_silliman@ncsu.edu](mailto:ben_silliman@ncsu.edu)) with any questions, concerns, or comments.

Thanks for all your help,

Ed Bowers